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"HYMNS OF THE AGES."*

HYMNS which commit themselves to our inmost memory, and cleave to it through all changes in joy and in sorrow, bearing in upon the soul truths deeper and more universal than those spoken in the creeds of the hour, furnishing it with the imagery which unrolls the scenery of heaven, and with the melodies which make audible to us beforehand its angelic harmonies,—these are the hymns of the ages. Not many such have ever been sung. Such as have been sung become more important to us than any other literature of human origin and composition in our own spiritual nurture, and the religious education of our children. The articles of a man's faith are comparatively external, made by the intellect for convenient handling, lying on the surface of his mind, or perhaps laid away in church-records to be used mainly by ministers and ecclesiastical councils. The very word, "articles," suggests something *articulated*, or cut up into convenient parcels by a process of the intellect. These are all very well; for believers and churches ought to put their convictions into as clear and definite forms as possible, always mindful that they do not become so fixed and frigid as to bar all growth, progress, and enlargement. But hymns touch the deeper fountains of our spiritual being. They reveal wellsprings of emotion to the consciousness, and give open-

* Hymns of the Ages. Third series. Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1865.

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ings of higher and grander prospects than any sermons and liturgies, or any dogmas of theology. They suggest a great deal more than the bare words would convey in any other form, often a great deal more than dawned upon the intelligence of the singer himself, especially if he sings from a genuine inspiration. Indeed, the first gleams of a newly opening truth often come in this way. They rise seer-like upon the inward vision, or flow down through the soul in liquid melodies long before the creeds have received and fixed them in tangible form.

Domestic worship is the duty of every family; and every member of the family ought to have an active part in it. What right have we to be parents, unless we accept all the parental responsibilities and duties? But every parent is the high priest at his own domestic altar; and he is false to a most solemn trust, if there be no altar in his house, or if he suffer it to be deserted. There they are, a group of immortal beings, some of them young, tempted, and beset with snares, liable all of them to be invaded and whelmed by the tide of worldliness that sweeps over society. Every morning it is their duty, because it is their safety, to draw together, with mind and heart open to the influence that brings God near them, and his angels around them, as a camp of fire. A renewing, refining, and hallowing spirit, the spirit of prayer, begetting a sense of dependence, and of the divine omnipresence, will surely, though it may be gradually and silently, pervade the whole house, and abide in it, and be breathed into all the duties of the day. Coarseness of mind, vulgar manners, profane living, hard-eyed scheming, are evils always liable to come in and take possession of the house, and infest more or less all its members, unless the family is thus organized as a divine institution, that makes marriage and birth to be sweet and holy; unless the parents or the elder members regard the family as "the church in the house," and accept the beautiful office of priesthood at its altar.

Why, then, are these duties so often neglected and disregarded even by Christians, who acknowledge them in theory? It is not always from sheer worldliness. It is very often

from a feeling of reserve and incompetency. We are not qualified, parents will say, to lead the devotions of the family, and make them edifying and delightful. Perhaps the memory goes back to an experience very unedifying and undelightful ; of prayers mumbled as lip-service ; of the Bible awfully droned out, and its grand old litanies (for such many of its chapters are) linked with degrading associations. This may be, though it is a very undevout spirit that will not find in any exercise, serious as all domestic worship must be, something good and true under its rudest forms. But there is no necessity even of these. Extemporaneous prayer should be only a part of the ritual of family worship. It should always be very short and comprehensive ; and, if we lack words, there are the words in which Jesus taught his disciples to pray, which express every want we ever had or ever can have, and which are always at hand, as "vials full of odors sweet," to bear our thoughts and feelings to the Father's ear. Then the whole family, old and young, can read together, in alternation, from the Bible, using not all the same version, but different ones,—for instance, those of Noyes, Campbell, Norton, and Conybeare and Howson,—thus bringing forth ever fresh shades of meaning, approximating ever the mind of inspiration, and preventing the reading from becoming a matter of mere rote and custom. Questions and answers will occur, self-applications may be made, and not the words merely, but the facts and the imagery of the Bible, will be continually stored up in the memory ; and its truths will be sure to come up, and utter themselves in days of temptation and trial.

But what we have specially in hand to say now is, domestic worship is the time and occasion for the hymn and the sacred song. It is all the better if they can be sung ; but, whether sung or not, they should be *read* ; and they will impart to the devotions of the family a marvellous richness, and will be a beauty and a joy for ever. Some book of devotional poetry, collected from the best sources, and wherever the Holy Spirit has struck the chords of the human lyre, should be ever at hand, should always accompany the Bible

and the liturgy in the delightful ritual of the family altar. Some will bear to be read over and over, and have their imagery imprinted on the young mind, and glow in the imagination, and form ever afterwards the divine scenery of the soul, and attune it to heavenly music. In our opinion, words can hardly exaggerate the importance of this as a means of spiritual culture, and intellectual and moral refinement. To elevate and purify the taste, and unfold and sanctify the young imagination, is of vast consequence in this dusty and money-changing world. Nursery rhymes are well for very young children to commit to memory. But what we now recommend does vastly more than these. It furnishes the soul with its choicest and grandest imagery,—that which will be necessary to give power and vividness to the doctrines of faith, and bathe them in the emotions of the heart. Where there is no vision, the people perish; for, when faith has no imagery to give to it the substance of things not seen by the eye of flesh, it fades out from the mind, and we are in danger of sinking into unbelief and sensuality.

We want good devotional poetry, then, for other use than to sing in churches. We want it in our families; and we want it, above all, at the hour of domestic worship. Hymns for choirs do not supply this want. They are too limited in their range, and, for the most part, are selections and fragments from utterances which could not be given entire. Strains in which the poet's whole heart has flowed out of him, and which have not been cut up and altered for a special purpose, are what we need for private and family reading. There has been a dearth of such poetry, at least in any accessible form. Watts we could never leave out; but he has only two strings to his lyre, and one of these only vibrates to the divine anger. He never quite emerged from the old pagan conceptions about death and the grave; never "climbed where Moses stood, and viewed the landscape o'er." Montgomery is tender and sweet, and the Wesleys are fervid with Christian love; but there are chords which they never strike. It is very interesting to observe, that, in the devotional songs which have sung themselves within the last twenty-five years, we

get views of the divine providence, of the work of Christ, of the divine paternity and immanence, of immortality as present and here, and not prospective, and over the river, given in tints which are more rich and varied, indicating the blushes of the new morning which is breaking upon the world.

During the last year, three new collections have appeared, each with its peculiar merits. Messrs. Longfellow and Johnson have revised their "Book of Hymns," or rather made a new one, which contains very delicious poetry. But they leave out the distinctive Christian element, though Christianity shines through their poetry in a reflected light, beautiful and pale. Sir Roundell Palmer's "Book of Praise" brings things out of his treasury which are new and old, and rich and rare. But much the best book, in our judgment, for the use which we recommend, is the third series of the "Hymns of the Ages," which has just been issued. It is the best of the three volumes which the compilers have given us. The second volume drew largely upon the quaint old English poets; and their verse was too hard and jagged to be wrought into our familiar trains of thought and feeling.

It is very evident that a different principle of selection and adaptation must govern in a compilation for choirs and churches from one which governs in a book for private devotion. Hymns to be sung, must needs be altered sometimes,—a part must be left out, and perhaps verbal alterations must be made, in order that the musical feet and pauses may be preserved. This, however, is delicate business, and often done without any show of necessity, and results in botching, and nearly spoiling some of our best hymns. But, in compilations for private use, the *ipsissima verba* ought to be given; and there is no excuse here for interpolating words and ideas into a writer's verses, and sending them forth again under his name. Sir Roundell Palmer has been careful to restore pieces which had been mutilated, to their first integrity; or, when this was not practicable, to point out where the seams and gaps had been made. The compilers of the "Hymns of the Ages," we believe, have never tampered with their authors,

though they sometimes give us part of a strain, when the whole would have been better; and hymns which had fallen into barbarous hands, they have not always rescued, and restored to their pristine beauty. Why should they not have given us the whole of that first-class hymn of Gisborne, commencing with the line, "A soldier's course from battles won," especially as it had suffered grievous mutilation, and its richest and noblest stanzas been excluded from our church-collections? The Apocalypse describes the River of Life with waters clear as crystal, and on either side the trees growing in mystic rows, bending with fruit, and clothed with healing leaves, reflecting the sunshine that streams down from the throne. Gisborne uses these types to foreshow the peace of Paradise; but the compilers leave out the two stanzas best fitted to haunt the imagination. And why should we not have the whole of Cowper's aspiration for a closer walk with God, and for similar reasons; especially as all the stanzas are connected by the finest threads, and not one of them can be displaced, and not a word altered, without marring their perfect unity? We cannot make out that Sir Roundell has entirely restored this hymn, and effaced the marks of tinkering and botching. In Dwight's old collection, made sixty-five years ago, and soon after the hymn first appeared, we have, judging from internal evidence, the genuine reading, —

"Oh for a closer walk with God!
A calm and heavenly frame;
And light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?

What peaceful hours I *then* enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill."

By omitting the second stanza, so essential to the unity of the whole, and then altering the third line in the third stanza,

substituting the words, "they have left," for "now I find," compilers have made Cowper say, that the aching void in him was occasioned by sweet memories and peaceful hours, and not, as he really does say just after, by the "sins" that drove from his breast the Holy Dove.

But worse barbarities have been practised upon Bryant. Compilers undertake to mend the rhythm of Bryant, whose verse flows like a clear brook, without a break or a gurgle, between banks of flowers. A song of consolation by him has become familiar in all our churches. We give the original as he wrote it, both because we are glad to grace our pages with it, and because it is good to look upon the face of a friend restored safe and sound, after having fallen into barbarous hands. We Italicise where the lines had been mutilated.

"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN."

*Oh! deem not they are blest alone
Whose lives a peaceful tenor keep:
The Power who pities man has shown
A blessing for the eyes that weep.*

*The light of smiles shall fill again
The lids that overflow with tears;
And weary hours of woe and pain
Are promises of happier years.*

*There is a day of sunny rest
For every dark and troubled night;
And grief may bide an evening guest,
But joy shall come with early light.*

*And thou, who, o'er thy friend's low bier,
Sheddest the bitter drops like rain,
Hope that a brighter, happier sphere
Will give him to thy arms again.*

*Nor let the good man's trust depart,
Though life its common gifts deny,—
Though, with a pierced and bleeding heart,
And spurned of men, he goes to die.*

*For God hath marked each sorrowing day,
And numbered every secret tear;
And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
For all his children suffer here.*

There is just a shadow of reason for some of these alterations, to reduce the number of syllables, and adapt the lines to church-music, though the words are so liquid as to render this even unnecessary. Choirs could sing more easily of the "promises of happier years," than to hiss through the "*ear-nests*" of them,— a word which perhaps was never before used in the plural, and which never ought to be again,— and they could sing of "each sorrowing day" better than of "each *anguished* day," unless, like Demosthenes, they desire an exercise to improve their articulation by putting pebble-stones into their mouths. The original should have been faithfully given in such a collection as the "Hymns of the Ages;" and the excellent taste of the compilers should have shown them, on the slightest reading, that Bryant could never have written such lines as they have given under his name.

The collection has hymns for a time of war, and a special department for old age. Madame Guyon's prison-notes breathe pensively out of the depths of the divine love in the soul, and show trial and suffering glorified therein. The compilers draw largely from living female writers, particularly Mrs. Stowe, Miss A. B. Waring, and Miss A. A. Procter. In these, there are indications of a broader religious experience, and of the old doctrines fusing into higher forms of faith in the warm glow and the mellowing light of the New Jerusalem. On pages 115-117 are two vesper-pieces, over the initials, "C. M. P.," published originally in the pages of this Magazine. Both are very sweet and graceful, but the second one we regard as perfect in its way; and, sung in the Spirit, and in the hush of the evening twilight, would render almost audible the chimes of heavenly bells, and "the brush of angel wings." We hope and believe that we are violating no propriety, when we credit them to Miss Charlotte Mellen Packard, whose contributions have been enough quoted and praised for her to reclaim what belongs to her.

In every collection of devotional poetry, there is more or less chaff along with the wheat. We suppose this is inevitable. Hymns are suggestive beyond the bare words, and

sometimes touch deep springs of emotion in one mind, or unlock in it some secret door that opens adown long twilight halls of memory ; when, to another mind, they are commonplace and cold. About one-third of the hymns in this volume we should pass over as second or third rate ; but they may speak to the condition of some one, when, with us, they touch no such trains of association. We extract the best of Miss Procter's, leaving out a stanza which we think embodies false doctrine.

OUR TITLES.

Are we not Nobles ? we who trace
 Our pedigree so high,
 That God for us and for our race
 Created earth and sky,
 And light and air, and time and space
 To serve us,— and then die.

Are we not Princes ? we who stand
 As heirs beside the throne ;
 We who can call the Promised Land
 Our heritage, our own ;
 And answer to no less command
 Than God's, and his alone.

Are we not Kings ? Both night and day,
 From early until late,
 About our bed, above our way,
 A guard of angels wait ;
 And so we watch and work and pray,
 In more than mortal state.

Are we not holy ? do not start :
 It is God's sacred will
 To call us temples set apart
 His Holy Ghost may fill :
 Our very food . . . Oh, hush my heart,
 Adore IT, and be still !

O God ! that we can dare to fail,
 And dare to say we must :
 O God ! that we can ever trail
 Such banners in the dust,—
 Can let such starry honors pale,
 And such a blazon rust !

Shall we upon such titles bring
 The taint of sin and shame?
 Shall we, the children of the King,
 Who hold so grand a claim,
 Tarnish, by any meaner thing,
 The glory of our name?

HYMNS FROM THE GERMAN.

TO THE ORIGINAL MELODIES.

XIX.

CHRISTMAS.

"ERMUNTRE DICH, MEIN SCHWACHER GEIST."

My languid spirit, upward spring;
 And, full of high emotion,
 The Saviour, whom the angels sing,
 Receive with glad devotion.
 This is the night on which he came,
 With infant form and humble name.
 He will, through birth and passion,
 Be Reconciliation.

Thou who rejoicest all my heart,
 My sovereign good in living!
 For all thy love, on my poor part,
 What can I think of giving?
 Lord, all I am, or can possess,
 I render in my thankfulness.
 Each joy and each disaster
 Shall bind me to thee faster.

Though now unseen, thou com'st again,
 With countless saints attending;
 And every eye shall see thee then,
 In clouds of heaven descending.
 Then I, too, shall behold thee, Lord,
 With glorious grace around thee poured;
 And there, where God doth raise thee,
 With all thy ransomed praise thee.

N. L. F.

CHRISTIANITY A GLAD FAITH.

It must have struck you, I think, in reading the Christian Scriptures, that there is a peculiarity in speaking of *life*, as in the words I have just read; "life" here meaning not the body's life, but the soul's life. The living man is the good man, the bad man is the dead man: "dead in trespasses and sins." And this is not a figure, but a fact. It is not something which may be true, or may be false, and which the future world only will disclose, but a fact,—true now, and true always; a fact of our innermost consciousness and our hourly experience, and interwoven with all the business and relations of life.

Now, this only true life is the life of the Son of God. "In him the LIFE was manifest;" and the question arises, Who are members of his Holy Catholic Universal Church? We answer only for ourselves, Those who have his spirit. Thus our creed is simple and short. There is, strictly speaking, but one true Church in this city or in the wide world. Its "builder and Maker is God."—"Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone." Its members are that great household of faith, "the true worshippers," with all their vast variety of opinions, honestly held, who, according to Christ's own definition, "worship God in spirit and in truth." We must set aside, then, the multitudes whom no man can number, to whom all modes of faith are alike, since they are equally indifferent to all. We must also set aside those of every visible Church, whose religion is only a tradition or an inheritance, and who take possession of it as of a patrimonial estate, asking no questions, or who at best regard Christianity as a good civil institution, an admirable police arrangement, to keep society in order, and protect property and life, that we may sleep quietly in our beds. And we are hardly authorized by the New-Testament standard to enroll in this Church those who only regard Christianity as a historical phenomenon,—as the highest moral philosophy,—satisfying their understandings,

their tastes, and in short their ideal of a perfect religion, but who feel no further personal interest. From this class, indeed, come some of the finest interpretations of Christianity,—descriptions of the character of Christ, like that of Rousseau,—which have never been surpassed; hymns, even, sung in almost every Christian Church, which it seems incredible should have come from any but saintly souls. Modern literature affords numerous illustrations. The explanation probably is, that a man's expressed sentiments are not always his real ones,—that the religious instincts never die out; and, in one of those devout moods which sometimes come to every man, those instincts assert themselves with great power, and the soul pours itself out in grateful hallelujahs or penitential Misericordies. Alas that they should spring only from transient emotions, and not from settled habits of the soul!

It may be said that this is reducing the members of the true Church to very narrow limits. We answer, the limitations are not ours. Christ has himself given the definition of "true worshippers;" and John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," says, "He who hath the Son, i.e., the spirit of the Son of God, hath life; and he who hath not this spirit hath not life."

It becomes, then, a serious question, Why have not the classes we have mentioned, whom it is the very object of Christianity to convert, accepted this most simple, pure, and sublime faith? It is impossible here to give all the reasons. But one prominent one is—false representations of this faith. We do not mean false dogmatic representations, but false representations of its character considered as a moral faith,—a religion of the heart and life, which are prejudicial to its cordial reception.

Thus we sometimes hear views of this life, with its manifold relations, claiming, indeed, to have the sanction of Christ, but which seem to us morbid and exaggerated. There is a fault-finding spirit, which criticises the world's social enjoyments, with its absorption in business, or, as it is oftener called, "love of money,"—its pride of intellect. It speaks of all these things in a hard and unfeeling manner,—

without sympathy, without discrimination, and often in a tone of harshness and assumption. It is belligerent and artificially solemn, instead of conciliatory and serious. But if the religious spirit is to find its growth and development in human society, in all human employments, in its joys, griefs, temptations, and triumphs, it should have taken a hearty interest in every thing of the kind, not only as good and right in itself, but as absolutely indispensable to the proper development of character. It should have rebuked all excess. It should have encouraged the legitimate employment of every faculty, and the indulgence of every reasonable enjoyment. And all this because it is the stuff of which a true life is made, and constitutes "the beauty of holiness." Why should the natural world be so lovely, and the moral world so ghostly? A man is as much a saint in shining garments as in sackcloth and ashes. Our instincts, even our animal instincts, are not unclean things. They are God's promptings, —not the Devil's seductions. If it were possible to annihilate any one of them, our nature would only be stunted and dwarfed. Educate them, and they expand into flower and fruit.

It is strange that this hoary error should not have been extirpated long ago. The idea that this human life should be made so dreary, that the spiritual life may be made more heavenly, finds not the smallest countenance in Nature or in Christianity. The shining heavens, the green earth, every ray of light, every flower that opens to the sun, is a silent and ample refutation. And with these the teachings of Jesus perfectly correspond. If the impression is given that Christianity is characterized by a morose, gloomy, and litigious spirit, we must not wonder that religion itself should, with common consent, be banished from the parlor and the exchange, from the realms of literature, and wherever scholars do most congregate; that clerical gentlemen and strictly religious men should sometimes be jealously excluded from scientific, and even philanthropic associations. Even the illustrious Newton protested against The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge holding its meetings in the rooms of

the Royal Society, saying, "It is a fundamental rule of the Society not to meddle with religion; and the reason is, that we may give no occasion to religious bodies to meddle with us." We must not complain of empty pews and deserted communion-tables, if the one thing needful is presented as the one thing repugnant to all our natural tastes. The features of virtue should be radiant with celestial beauty; and we have always supposed that society was in no small degree indebted to Christianity for the amenities and graces of life; and that most men are quite as much edified by "glad tidings of great joy," and descriptions of the happiness of a true life, as by wailings over sin and its consequences. It is better to fill up the "army of the faithful" with loyal volunteers than with reluctant recruits by a forced draft.

If the only true Church is a Church in conformity with the spirit and life of Christ, then men must be brought into sympathy with the character of Christ. And it is in no cynical spirit that we say, that the expounders of Christianity have here often made only a one-sided representation of this character. They have dwelt too exclusively upon the suffering Christ, and too little upon the social and triumphant elements of his character.

The records of the Gospels are too full of Christ's active benevolence to suggest a doubt of his prevailing cheerfulness. The somewhat common impression, that he was severely serious, and had little sympathy with human life in its secular and social aspects,—with the glad feelings of human hearts, and the joy of festive occasions,—rests on very slender foundations. With the exception of the very brief period of his ministry when he was burdened with the heaviest cares, history and tradition are absolutely silent with regard to his character, except to hint that he was a precocious and remarkable boy. There is not a particle of evidence that he always wore a solemn and sad aspect, as some appear to think becomes a teacher from heaven. It was a very different type of men who long afterwards affected to walk in his steps, and, from the far-off loopholes of their sacred retreats, discoursed dismally of the vanity of this world.

But here we are met by the argument of phrases, — Was not our Saviour “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief”? We hear of his weeping: do we ever hear of his smiling? Now, such questions as these, coming from some persons, savor a good deal of cant; and, coming from others, reveal a very miserable conception of the character of Christ. A few incidents gathered from the brief memoranda of the Gospels answers them all. On one of those occasions which call forth the most exuberant manifestations of joy, he went not only as one of the guests, but heightened the festivity of the scene by a miracle of love: and we know from the domestic history of the Jews, that, at such times, there was always music and dancing; and, if he had disapproved of all such manifestations, he would either have expressed his disapprobation, or absented himself altogether. It would not increase our veneration for the Saviour to know that he never smiled. When he took little children in his arms and blessed them, we imagine there was something in that divine countenance very like a smile. Men forget our Saviour’s position while on this earth. They forget that very serious occasions call forth very serious emotions. It has been remarked of the greatest men, that their faces often wear the expression of profound sadness. It would be strange if it were not so; if, when their souls were filled with, perhaps, the salvation of their country, and they were perilling life, fortune, reputation, every thing, — with the risk of failure in their glorious enterprise, — strange, indeed, if their faces were wreathed with smiles. Now our Saviour was engaged in an enterprise to which all others were comparatively insignificant, not the temporal salvation of a single people, but the spiritual salvation of a world. He was a young man: his time was short. He had not one friend who thoroughly understood him, or upon whom he could implicitly depend. The cross, too, threw its dark shadow before him. No wonder that he sometimes groaned in spirit, and felt that he was alone. But though always serious, and sometimes sad, he was never gloomy. He sympathized with Nature in all her joyous aspects. He pointed his disciples to the raven fed by a care-

ful Providence, to the flowers clothed in surpassing beauty. The very fact, indeed, that he so constantly drew his illustrations from natural objects, is an indication, not of a gloomy and morose, but of a serene and cheerful piety.

We should not concede away all our integrity because our neighbor is virtuous, and can see nothing but sin. Because a man is sick with moral dyspepsia, or has a cataract in his eye, is not the light sweet, and a pleasant thing to see the sun? If *his* senses are dull, can *I* not enjoy the flowers, and bask in the sunshine?

We do not find, I think, in our human experience, that those persons are the most to be trusted, the most meek and heavenly in their dispositions or their lives, the bravest in the conflict, or the most victorious, who always wear a solemn face, and speak in a solemn manner, with their eyes lifted to heaven, and their hands on their hearts; who will eat no pleasant food; whose lives have no holidays; who prefer a fast to a festival, and, like the man in "Pilgrim's Progress," think that "religion consists in a great crying-out against sin;" who see God as the "King of kings," but seldom as God the Father; who delight in calling this world a wilderness, a prison, or a vale of tears, but never a home; and who almost justify the sarcasm of Byron, "What a pity that all things pleasant are sinful!"

We have quite as much confidence in that man whose piety is simple, natural and still; who rejoices in the sports and shouts of happy children; who believes that "God has given us all things richly to enjoy," and that we ought to enjoy them with moderation and gratitude; who sees God not only in the whirlwind and the fire, but in the still small voice of a ceaseless beneficence, and the million million tokens of a Father's love; "who no revenue has," perhaps, but "his good spirits" and manly soul, "to feed and clothe him;" who, in suffering all, seems to suffer nothing, and "whose blood and judgment are so well commingled, that they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger to sound what stop she pleases." This is the man we would seal for our friend. "His words are bonds, and his oaths oracles;" and he will pass for a true man the world over.

Surely all the benignant features of Christianity may be presented, without injury to the strictness or solemnity of its principles. It is a faith as exhilarating as it is pure and uncompromising. Its very genius is love. It flies on swift wings to the beside of the dying. With gentle hands it wipes away the mourner's tears, and points to a happiness in heaven "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Who but one whose soul was "touched to fine issues," thrilling to every humane and tender emotion, would have proclaimed principles which will cleanse the world of every social wrong? No home in Judea, that Jesus of Nazareth entered, but was made more glad by his presence. The strongest faith would sometimes break down but for the words of "good cheer" that come from the pages of the gospel. There is none too much, we will not say of mirthfulness, but of good-humor and contented cheerfulness in human society. There is much of tragedy in this mortal life. Though there may be no skeleton in every family, there is enough of carking care, of disappointment, of sickness and bereavement, in almost any ordinary life to call for all the energy and fortitude and patience and faith of the stoutest heart.

If, as the traveller Dr. Clark tells us, when he looked upon the ruins of its massive walls, and saw their harmonious adjustment, it was no fable that Thebes was built by Amphion's lyre; and that, both in ancient and modern Greece and Egypt, stupendous labor was always carried on with the accompaniment of music,—surely we may resort to similar means to lift the burden from the weary soul. The song of Deborah and the timbrel of Miriam animated the religious patriotism of their countrymen; and Christianity recognizes, as not among the least of her auxiliaries, all those joyous instrumentalities that lift up the sinking hands and strengthen the feeble knees of her heart-broken disciples. You have done a good deed, friend, which will shine far in a naughty world, when you have charmed away, though for a brief moment, physical suffering, or "some sick offence within the mind;" when you have comforted an aching head or an aching heart

by even a pleasant word, or an otherwise insignificant act. "If," Emerson once said, "the lifting of a finger would save life, even that trifling action would be sublime." A sportive anecdote sometimes has a force as sacred as a Christian benediction. Every drop of cold water given to a thirsty disciple shall be counted to you for righteousness. Every ray of light which you send into the dark corner of a desolate soul shall illuminate your own soul with a glory caught from heaven. When you speak gently to the erring and the sinful, it shall be an assurance of pardon to yourself; for —

"The quality of mercy is not strained:
It droppeth like the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed:
It blesseth him who gives, and him who takes."

THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP.

THE wolves led the sheep such a life, that, at last, they could scarcely exist; and it was absolutely necessary that the Government should interfere to save them. To this end a council was held. It is true the greater number of those present were wolves, but it is not every wolf that has a bad name; and there have been instances, which must not be forgotten, of wolves, when they were satisfied, walking quite peaceably past a flock. Why, then should not wolves be admitted into the council? for though we must protect the sheep, still we must not be unjust to the wolves. Accordingly, a council was formed in the thickest part of the wood, where the members deliberated, debated, heard evidence, and at last made a law, which was, word for word, as follows:— "As soon as a wolf is found troublesome in the neighborhood of a flock, and begins to annoy the sheep, then any sheep, without distinction of rank, has a right to take the wolf by the neck, and drag him instantly before the bar of the council. And nothing in this law shall be added or taken away."

"But though it is said that wolves are liable to punishment," is the fabulist's conclusion, "I find that, let the sheep be accusers or accused, the wolves still devour them." — *The Russians at Home.*

THE ILLUSIONS OF LIFE.

A SERMON FOR NEW YEAR, BY REV. N. L. FROTHINGHAM, D.D.

EZEK. xiv. 9: "I the Lord have deceived that prophet."

YESTERDAY the year was old, and ready to expire. Then the thoughts naturally looked backward. The space that had been traversed was measured by the reflective mind. The past spoke to us, and questioned with us, and seemed to shake its shadowy finger at us as it flitted away. Something of the solemnity that naturally belongs to age and the end, to the considerations of time's flight and nature's necessities, could scarcely fail to have fallen upon those hours. As we come together on this first day and first Lord's Day of the new year, a different train of thought is the one most readily suggested. We look forward rather than behind, when a fresh course of opportunity seems to be opening with a fresh account of time. Expectation now takes the lead, instead of memory. Hope and fear preside over what is but just begun. They are the angels of the future; and as they bend over the closed ark of its covenant, like the cherubim in the Jewish sanctuary, they touch each other with their shining and dusky wings. When a new era commences,—even such an era as the annual birth of the sun,—we all become prophets; some true ones, and some false. We wonder what the year will disclose for us. We surmise what may happen, if we do not predict what *shall*. What a wild sweep of conjectures, fancies, and desires, plays over that prospect! One person is calculating the probabilities of events. Another, without considering what is probable, is drawing largely upon fortune. The simple and credulous have been busy, perhaps, with arts of divination, such as the cast of an accident, the turn of a leaf or card, a spark in the fire-place, or a shadow on the wall. Are not these as respectable, though not honored so much, as the superstitions that led the Roman augurs to watch the flight of swallows, and moved the great King of Babylon to shake together his

arrows at the parting line of his march, that he might decide, by the fall of the lot, whether he should turn his arms against Rabbath of Ammon, or Jerusalem itself. The inquisitive, whether wise or not, whether trustingly or not, are asking after the signs of the times. The venturesome and sanguine are projecting their plans over the uncertain months; some meaning to "go into such a city, and continue there," and some resolving to be prosperous enough at home. The light-hearted anticipate the joy that is in reserve for them. The public-spirited meditate the improvements that shall be carried forward in the community. The affectionate have been engaged in hopes and prayers that their friends may be spared and blest. Young persons look forward to the advantages of being a year older, which, by and by, they will not be anxious to count. The elders look forward also to the compensations and comforts, that, through God's mercy, the extremest age does not forbid. Important changes of condition fall within the view of many, so as to fill them with visions of the fairest hope. The ambitious breathe a new aspiration after eminence. The unfortunate will mend their condition. They who know that they have not done as they should, mean to retrieve their forfeits. They who are elated with the success that they have won already, say that the coming period shall differ from the present only by being "more abundant." The imaginative build shining houses out of the cloud, that may be driven away by the wind, or dissolve upon them in sorrows. These are they who foretell pleasantly. How many there are, on the other hand, whose dread prevails over their confidence! They forebode. They tremble. They would hold their minds back, if they could, from the coming days, that they do not love to contemplate, and of which they cannot discern the forms. But they are impelled to gaze, and they cannot choose but inwardly prophesy. We are all soothsayers and diviners now. Every spirit is a prophet, when there lies before its sight what it must venture on, and may guess at, but cannot decide.

Having dwelt thus long on this part of our subject, I pass to a second,—that we are all ready to complain, more or

less, in one way or another, of being deceived in our heart's wish and prediction by the courses of the world. Events do not correspond to our anticipations, and we call our state a scene of impositions. The illusions of life are a general topic of lamentation. The disappointed dwell on it, and even they who are only afraid that they shall be disappointed. Some take it up sentimentally, and with a sort of poetic sadness; while others repeat it bitterly, as if it were the hard lesson of many a wreck and disaster. Some, while they say it, reproach Providence; some but mourn over what they conceive to be the necessary order of things; and some hardly know what they intend to say. It is very observable that the youthful are more apt to enlarge upon it than they who have had a longer and wider knowledge of what they blame; and this looks as if the change arose rather from fancy-sickness than from any sober judgment of what actually takes place. But still the cry is, We are beguiled; we live in a condition of deceits; we were made but to be the dupes of unreal appearances and the sport of strong accidents. Now, we must admit something of what is here set down to be true; for it would not be so common a sentiment, if there were really nothing to sustain it. We do admit almost the whole; differing from the complainers chiefly in the different light, in which we set their complaint. We, prophets (and every one here is such), *are* perpetually deceived. We are going forward, and we look further than we step; and, as we bend our eyes upon the future, we shape it into a thousand things that will never happen. We devise projects that will come to nought, or that we shall lose even the will to execute. We expect what will not be bestowed. We promise, and there shall be no performance. We predict, and it shall be ordered otherwise. We shall find something different from what we sought. We shall accomplish something different from what we intended. The will of the Most High will be wrought, while we are pursuing our own. What we determine will be set aside. What we feel assured of will fail. Unlooked-for results will be likely to come out from the deep uncertainty that overhangs us. We may be dis-

appointed even in attaining our desire. If the past has not contented us, we have small likelihood of being content with what is coming; and if our whole being is an enigma, and what we have actually been through we but imperfectly understand, how must our view be at fault, and our contrivance baffled, when they presume to guess at the hidden, and touch the impalpable of distant days! Yet so presuming are we. We insist where we have no claim. We make compacts, as we think, with time and fate, and call ourselves deluded, if those compacts are not kept.

In saying this, it must not be forgotten that there is a good sense in which we may be diviners; that there is a sense, in which every one *must* be prophetic, or he is not human. Our natural understanding reflects, that it may the better foretell. Our natural affections, while they cling, aspire. Why do we observe, but to prognosticate? Why do we study the effects that have been produced aforetime, but to avail ourselves of that science in discerning and governing effects that shall be produced hereafter? Our knowledge has two faces, and one face is forward. We must not overlook that. We must not, from a sleepy humility and a paralyzing mistrust, deny our birthright. We are not carried along blindly. There is a spirit of prescience in us. The best part of our domain and dominion does not lie behind, but on. There are visions for the soul in that far distance,—visions that are neither shades nor fables; clearer than the sun ever lighted, more substantial than any golden treasures that ever flashed back that sun's rays. The majesty of our nature is not revealed till we recognize it there. Our reason, as it grows pure, is endowed with a divine eyesight. Our heart bears the imprint of an immortal seal. We may as well cease to breathe, as cease to predict. It is our distinction that we can do it at all. It is our highest skill when we exercise that privilege reverently and wisely. God forbid that we should throw any disparagement upon this great prerogative of our race, that connects us, as of one intelligence, with all the sages and seers of the oldest and the latest generations! I would not disclaim the rightfulness, or asperse the joy, of prefiguring what is to be-

tide us, of conversing with the spirit and fortunes of advancing days. I exclude nothing of this ennobling sort, when I speak of the presumption of those who are calculating selfishly, or making proud demands, or indulging in wild and indolent fancies, on that doubtful futurity, which we should all contemplate, but with submission. It is when a person has been thus venturesome and thus simple; when he has encouraged himself beyond what our mortal experience warrants; when he has committed himself beyond what a holy prudence allows; when his imagination or wilfulness has run riot, or his feeble and timid disposition has shrunk away in a corner, to try after a dreamy slumber,—that he will be most inclined to be hard on the illusions of life, and to throw out dark hints as if the Lord of the world had deceived him. And he *has* deceived him, though not in a way to furnish any apology for the repining. As the text set it forth: “I the Lord have deceived that prophet.” This will sound like a strange doctrine. How can it be, that the God of truth deludes his creatures? Is it not an inconsistency to say so? Is it not an impious reproach against his pure majesty? Not, surely, when we understand it aright; and we shall so understand it, when we divide the assertion into two points. The first is, God has so disposed the elements of our nature, that whoever puts them to irregular exercises, or disturbs the balance of their propriety, will be misled thereby, through the very sensibilities and faculties that the creating wisdom has ordained. The second is, God so guides the course of events, that they will inevitably deceive those who are pressing their own devices, and calculating selfishly their chances, and arrogating the fulfilment of their vain hearts’ desires, without reference to his purposes, and in opposition to his commandments.

Look first at your own nature, and observe how that is constituted; how long-sighted it is, how long-handed it is; how benevolently endowed. What a noble distinction is that which sets before us continually an ideal perfection, that we must strive after, but never attain; an eternal reality, though nowhere but in the mind, and before which every

thing actual is trivial and poor ! What a beautiful power is the imagination, as it paints its glowing pictures for us, and calls up its moving figures of enchantment for us, and sets a brighter world within the cloudy circumference of this ! It crosses with its magic intervals the weariest life, and visits the wanderer and the sufferer and the darkened captive, with repose and rejoicing and the sweet free light. How blessed is the principle of hope !—that immortal tenant of shaking walls ; proving that there is one thing at least on earth, which, like God's holy one, cannot "see corruption." It is always saying, "Be of good cheer." It is always pointing towards something better than the present. Who can tell how it invigorates the faint, and inspires the discouraged ? It is a substitute for what we lose. It is an alleviation of what we suffer. It makes impossible what would otherwise be the utter prostration and despondency of the mind. But all these beneficent preparations for our advancement and happiness we may pervert, and do pervert. Because the ideal cannot be transformed into the actual, some say there is a deception, and fall into repining. They feel it as a wrong, that the absolute, the unchangeable, is nowhere presented in the vessels of earth and scenes of time. Others give the supreme place to the pleasant powers of the fancy. They set the chief value on what is not only unattainable, but altogether unreal and untrue. They live in a false state ; and, when its spells are broken, they complain that they have been deluded. Others, again, give their expectations a wrong direction or an extravagant heat, and, because they are never satisfied, declare that they have been treacherously treated. In all these instances, they change to their hurt what was meant for their good. They turn their own nature into an impostor. They deceive *themselves* by their mistake and abuse of those laws which God gave that the faithful might be made to stand, while the disobedient are left to stumble in them. Again, and in a like way, with respect to the disposal of the year's changing fortunes, the Sovereign Ruler deceives those who trust in themselves rather than in him. That is, he gives them up to their *self*-deceiving. By

rapid movements, by unlooked-for disclosures, by the slow and secret workings of his providence, he disconcerts their enterprises, he crosses their expectation, he smites their pride. Those who are absorbed in their passionate interests, he abandons to all the mortification of their defeat or the emptiness of their success. There are no safes for their treasures, there are no vouchers for their promises, there is no security for their lives. Their comforts are defenceless, their feelings are open to ravage. Their swelling predictions will be struck dumb with shame. The Lord hath deceived those prophets. "He frustrateth the tokens of such soothsayers, and maketh the diviners mad." We know that nothing can content the insatiable; that nothing can bless the thankless; that nothing can accord with harsh tempers, or run even with crooked ways. Let us reflect also that nothing in heaven or earth engages to respond to unreasonable desires, or *can* go right, with a base spirit and an iniquitous intent.

The doctrine, which the discourse now submitted to your attention would impress, is, in few words, this. The soul, and the God who made it, and the order of Providence that rules over mortal things, are all true: their assurances are "yea and amen," if we are duly observant and subject. And, on the other hand, they will all appear delusive together,—the world a cheat, the heart a seducer, and the spirit of the Lord a mocking spirit,—as long and as far as we are obstinate in our errors, insolent in our claims, untaught and unreconciled. Let us lay this to our hearts, as we are entering on the new path and uncertain hopes of another year. Let us bring no charges of fraud or guile against our lot. Such charges do but recoil against the accuser. We must lie under laws, if we would inherit promises. The moderate and confiding will never fear being imposed on. They will be always looking rather on the most gracious fulfilments. "Covet earnestly the best gifts," and you will not be sent empty away. There are no fallacies but of men's own framing; men who, like the persons alluded to in the text, pretend to speak oracles while their lips are profane. Oh, be not like these! Give more pains to

prepare for the future than to guess at it. Therein is the best of prophecies,—prophecies that no events of time shall go counter to, and no length of time can bring to nought. They shall be the truest prophets, who read the future from the instructions of the past. They shall be the *happiest* prophets, who have lived that past well. God will not suffer such to be deceived in their judgment, or to be cheated of their hope. And consider that this very day, through which we are now moving, will, in a few hours, be with the past: turn your use of this, this single one, then, into a blessed augury. Mark it deep with signs of heavenly promise, signalize it with convictions of truth, with resolutions of duty. Think of the objects for which God gave you life. Think of the purpose for which Christ gave himself up to death. Let not the young year grow gray over any habit of transgression, making it but the more desperate. Do not put away a day's preparation for that world to come, whose duration makes the “pyramids but pillars of snow, and all that is past but a moment.” Take holy vows upon you. Fix in your hearts the principles and the expectation of the just. Those principles submit to no changes of season or condition. That expectation will be fulfilled in eternal life, when all the beautiful forms of this world's delight shall lie in cold ashes.

WE may make an idol even of truth; for truth, apart from charity, is not God: it is his image and a representation (*une idole*), which must not be loved or adored; still less must we love or adore its opposite, which is falsehood.—*Pascal*.

NATURE has her perfections, to show that she is the image of God; and her defects, to show that she is *only* the image.—*Ibid.*

FAITH treats of things upon which the senses are silent, but not of things opposed to their evidence. It is above, but not contrary to them.—*Ibid.*

NATURE has a tendency to reproduce herself. A grain thrown into good soil multiplies. A principle planted in a sound understanding yields fruit.—*Ibid.*

HYMNS FROM THE GERMAN.

TO THE ORIGINAL MELODIES.

XX.

NEW YEAR.

"WIE VIEL WIR JAHRE ZÄHLEN."

Melody: "Nun ruhen alle Wälder."

So many years of living
As God has yet been giving,
Now fail from life's amount ;
And strength is disappearing,
As age is nearing, nearing
Its work and gain of small account.

And as this year is failing,
The path the earth is sailing,
To shorter daylight grown ;
So hasten, with it to perish,
What Time must breed and cherish,—
Time, by which all is overthrown.

As one year in its going
Has others in its showing,
The old points on to new ;
The sun we saw descending,
And with the shadows blending,
Soon climbs aloft the morning blue ;

So, too, though we grow older,
And hand and thought grow colder,
We forward look, elate.
The deeper the declining,
The nearer to the joining
With the unseen, eternal state.

Oh thou, the ever-living,
Through whose death we're surviving
All count of years and time ;
With thee live all thou savest,
For whom thyself thou gavest,
And chosest to thy realm sublime.

N. L. F.

MORNING SIDE.

CHAPTER I.—BIOGRAPHY.

I HAD passed the middle period of life when I first went to Morning Side. Adjoining it was an estate which had then fallen into my possession ; and, as the place took my fancy, I resolved to make it my home. It was less than half a mile distant from Morning Side,—a fact which seemed to us no small attraction when we left the city to take possession of the farm.

I well remember that I had some misgivings as to the wisdom of this step. But I gratefully feel that I never made a better move in my life. I do not refer to the commonplaces about the advantages of freeing one's self from the perplexities of business, and of enjoying the quiet of a rural home. We like to be sure, first of all, whether, after the excitements of town-life, one can keep his nature alive in the country. Had it not been for an unexpected intimacy I formed there, which gave a higher pitch to the key-note of my life, I fear I should have followed the example of those who relinquish city activity for rustic torpor.

I think no traveller among the hills in the interior of New England can pass Morning Side, without noticing its picturesque situation. The house stands on an eastern slope of a long but gentle declivity, a few rods distant from the road ; and the broad spreading elms each side of the chief avenues give a rich, sumptuous air to the place. It is elevated so high above the surrounding country, that, from its front door,

the spires of nearly a dozen churches are distinctly seen ; and the entire outlook, from the cleanly cultivated fields close around, to the varied contour of the remote mountain-range, hardly ever fails to arrest and please the eye.

The old homestead itself has not much to boast of. It belongs to that class of dwellings which look as if the top half of each had obliquely slidden off, and been spirited away ; leaving a long roof sloping almost to the ground. This style of architecture, very common a hundred years ago, brought by our fathers from England, and often seen, I am told, in the hamlets of that country, is not without an element of homely common sense. Presenting a wedge-like shape to the bleakest quarter, how the most furious blasts went careering over such a house, only holding it firmer to the foundation, without hazard of those accidents of unroofing and overturning which sometimes happen to more symmetrical and aspiring structures !

I believe I never asked how long the Ashtons had lived at Morning Side. I found them there when I first knew the place. The old folks had lately died, leaving a memory much honored for the manner in which they made the refinements of city-life shed a grace around that rural home, and, in the case of Mrs. Ashton particularly, for a strength of mind, and high culture, not often surpassed either in country or in town.

Arthur was their eldest son. He was his mother's boy, resembling her in delicacy of organization, in quickness of penetration, and soundness of judgment, and a sort of electric sympathy with the best side of every thing.

I used to think, when I saw his slight frame, his fine skin, his thin silken hair, his clear blue eyes, in which gleamed the force of a rare strength of will, that he had been dropped down in the wrong place. But I am not so sure of that. Perhaps we do not stop to think what we mean, when we say that powers are wasted which are not known and praised by the world. Who can believe that notoriety adds any thing to the greatness of a noble life ?

On my removal into the country, I could not but notice

what a mark Arthur Ashton had already made on the minds of all who knew him. Not only in the village,—a mile and a half distant,—but far around Morning Side, there was a deference and affectionate respect with which every one approached him, altogether singular, I thought, towards a young man twenty-four years of age.

In my first estimate of his character, I hardly did him justice. To tell the truth, I thought it an easy matter to get a local country reputation. But I had not had a half-dozen conversations with him before I shared the general feeling.

Besides, I have somewhat changed my opinion of a judgment of character formed in the country. It seems to me to be under far less bias of factitious standards than in the city; and I believe we may pretty confidently accept for true steel what the free polarity of a hundred unsophisticated minds certifies to be such.

Arthur had been through college, which he left, as I have been informed, with much honor. He must have carried there the seeds of a wisdom which college-life in general, I fear, does but little to mature, and less to implant. He was something better than a knowing man. Of this the tones of his voice testified. I am not sure I can go so far as those who affirm that the voice is an infallible betrayer of character; that logic, sciolism, aesthetic culture, each mental and moral state, has a tone of its own, by which it is at once recognized: still, it must be acknowledged, that the ear has mystic and cunning ways of judging. While Arthur's conversation had the precision and ease of a cultivated man, there was a sort of undertone that had a strange fascination. It was at once felt to be the natural echo from a deep loving heart.

In Arthur Ashton, every one observed, also, a healthy and sustained enthusiasm in his daily employments. What he found to do, he did with his might. It was through the earnestness of his nature. Of course, at this late day, no one needs be told that farming is something more than mere physical toil, and gives scope to all the knowledge and science that can be brought to the subject. What surprised me in him was the rapidity with which he obtained and applied, at

the right moment, information relating to the manifold operations of dairy-produce, fruit-culture, cattle-breeding, hay-curing, root-raising, grain-growing ; all of which were perpetually assuming varying interests, according to markets, and the general progress of agricultural knowledge.

He was not a mere book-farmer. He had that practical sagacity which culs success out of theory ; and he appeared to me to be amassing and distributing a whole encyclopædia of information relating to that business, which, as it was the first natural occupation of man, seems to touch both nature and man at more points than any other pursuit.

What walks we have had together ! A favorite stroll was to the rear of his house, then skirted by a forest, thickly wooded with oak, chestnut, and maple, through which avenues had been opened,—the scene of many a rustic merry-making, and of serious talks when he and I would stray there to catch the last rays of the setting sun, pouring its golden light through the Gothic arches of the grand old trees. Oftentimes we sauntered half a mile down the road to a brook that gathered the waters from a wide circuit ; and as they poured over precipitous rocks, or glided along a pebbly shore, they formed a glad, sociable stream, in harmony with some of our varying moods.

One other attraction for our steps I must not omit to name. This was a glen two miles distant, where was an abrupt gorge amid the high hills, which on two sides presented a perpendicular wall, forty or fifty feet high, and twice as many apart, all covered with moss and ivy. Through its partial gloom from overspreading trees, and its silence, broken only by the cry of the cat-bird, or the dripping of water, it was as a solemn temple,—“ fit for worship,” as Arthur often said.

With like distinctness do I remember some of our walks over his farm. At every step, he revealed his manifold and exuberant life. In one field, he had tried a new agricultural experiment ; in another, he had detected a sly freak of Nature ; his fruit-trees were pets to which he imputed a sort of personal consciousness and will ; there was not a note of the robin, the bluebird, the martin, which he did not observe,

and seem in his heart to respond to ; nor was there a plant that we passed, from the dandelion and buttercup of the meadow, to the burdock and tansy that grew by the wayside, or the sunflowers that seemed to be always peeping over the walls to observe us, of which he did not have some pretty little bit of natural history to relate.

Ah ! yes : those were happy days ; and few pictures more dear have I laid away in my memory than those which Morning Side then supplied, when some bright, dewy sunrising saw Arthur drive his team a-field to overturn the green-sward in long furrows, which yielded their fresh earth-smell at every step, or when, at the close of a warm afternoon, he came up the lawn with loads of the sweet-scented new hay, or when at eventide he would sit at the front door, with his brothers and sisters around him ; and the full moon, and the scream of the night-hawk, and the distant note of the whip-poorwill, and the gleam of the lightning-bug, were the accompaniments of a scene of surpassing peace and joy.

These scenes have all passed away. It was only for a brief period that they were known. As we look back upon departed joys, we sometimes wonder they left us so soon ; and to many a stricken heart it may even seem as if Nature at times shows herself to be a jealous step-mother, in snatching our blessings at the moment we are enjoying them the most.

It is but a passing feeling. We re-assure ourselves by the conviction, that her relation to us is primal ; that her great maternal heart is without waywardness ; that it is from the depth of her infinite love that we have had the blessing for a while, and then its precious remembrance for ever ; that she allows nothing to pall upon the appetite ; that this perpetual shifting of events proves how inexhaustible are her resources, while time may show the new to be even better than the old. After all, the only defect is with ourselves, who, dazzled by what has been so bright before us, can, for a while, see nothing better and nothing other than the old.

(To be continued.)

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, AND UNITARIANISM IN ENGLAND.

(Concluded.)

THE external happiness of Dr. Priestley's life was now to be interrupted, though the inward, founded on the love of God and man, could never be. Notwithstanding his friendship for Franklin, and his well-known adherence to the liberal side in the discussions relative to America, he had hitherto incurred no especial hostility from the party in power. He had even twice been offered a pension from the government, by those who were supposed to have influence to obtain it; but in each case declined, preferring that the expense of his scientific researches, when it went beyond his own means, should be aided by the unasked contributions of his many friends, rather than risk his independence by becoming a pensionary of government. But now the world beheld with wonder and awe the commencement of that revolution in France, which, at once gathering strength, and goaded into madness by the opposition it encountered, was to deluge, not only France, but all Europe, with blood. At first, however, the progress of that revolution was hailed with delight by the noblest spirits in every nation. The destruction of the Bastile, the stronghold of time-worn oppression, was considered a suitable occurrence to be commemorated as the leading event of the mighty drama then in progress. On its third anniversary, the 14th of July, 1791, the friends of liberty in England hailed it with public celebrations. For that, in Liverpool, Roscoe furnished his famous ode, beginning

"O'er the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France
See the day-star of Liberty rise;
Through the clouds of detraction unsullied advance,
And hold its new course through the skies.
An effulgence so mild, with a lustre so bright,
All Europe with wonder surveys;
And, from deserts of darkness and dungeons of night,
Contends for a share of the blaze."

But, while this triumphant strain was resounding at Liverpool, at Birmingham a mob, infuriated by political and religious bigotry, were laying sacrilegious hands on the temple of God, and destroying the house, the library, and the instruments of a peaceful Christian philosopher, because he was known as one of the champions of freedom.

About two years before, Dr. Priestley had preached and printed a sermon on the subject of the Test Act,—the harsh law, since repealed, by which Unitarians and other Dissenters were subjected to disabilities. This sermon led to a controversy with two of the clergymen of the town, in which they maintained those high doctrines with regard to the powers of government which seemed more worthy of the days of Charles II. than of a century after his time. This controversy served to mark Dr. Priestley and his church as the objects of popular hate. The mob found occasion for its violence in the celebration, by the liberal party, of the anniversary of the taking of the Bastile. Although Priestley had little to do with this, the rioters, encouraged, it was said, by some persons in power, burned the meeting-house in which he preached; then another meeting-house, and then his dwelling, demolishing his library and apparatus. His own life, and that of one of his sons, were in imminent danger. He had to escape from Birmingham. He says himself: “If, instead of flying from lawless violence, I had been flying from public justice, I could not have been pursued with more rancor, nor could my friends have been more anxious for my safety. One man, who happened to see me on horseback, on one of the nights in which I escaped from Birmingham, expressed his regret that he had not taken me; expecting, probably, some considerable reward, as he said it was so easy for him to have done it.” He was earnestly advised to disguise himself on his way to London; but this he would not do, consenting only to the necessary precaution, that the place taken for him in the mail-coach should be in another name than his own. Arriving in London, it was some time before his friends would allow him to appear in the streets, fearing that party rage would follow him even there.

He obtained from the laws of his country some reparation, though inadequate, for the losses he had sustained; and for three years continued to reside in London, and its neighborhood. His energetic mind was unbroken by personal suffering, and the sense of popular odium.

The hour of adversity brought to view the kindness of his friends and the zeal of his admirers. Liberal donations were made to repair his losses; addresses of sympathy were sent to him from various sources in England, and from abroad. In France, the privilege of citizenship was conferred upon him; and he was invited by several constituencies—as he says, from a mistake of his talents and disposition—to represent them in the National Convention. He was soon invited to become the successor of Dr. Price, at Hackney, near London.

Dr. Priestley now printed an Appeal to the Public, with reference to the outrage at Birmingham; and, as this was replied to by those who found themselves implicated, a second Appeal in defence of the first. But he soon rose above all personal subjects of controversy, to defend that religion which he was falsely accused of assail ing. He published answers to Wakefield's attack on the institution of public worship, and to Evanson's book on the "Dissonance of the Gospels." Besides these, he brought out "Letters to the Swedenborgian Society," "Letters to the Philosophers and Politicians of France on the Subject of Religion," and "Sermons on the Evidences of Christianity."

He wrote also a "Reply to Mr. Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution." He shared, with thousands of the best of his countrymen, a deep interest in the progress of events in France; but France was still at peace with England, and Louis XVI., though with diminished power, was still recognized as king. When the French complimented Priestley with the offer of citizenship, he replied, not by a political essay, but by a series of "Letters on Religion;" thinking that the popularity he had gained with them might give weight to his words, when he spoke of that great theme. Had they followed such guidance, instead of that of atheists and de-

bauchees, the history of the next twenty years would not have been written in blood.

Dr. Priestley had established himself at Hackney, with the hope that there would be his home to the end of life; and with delight had entered a new laboratory, where his friends, and the friends of science, had provided instruments to take the place of those that had enriched the world with so much of chemical knowledge. But he soon found that a quiet home in England was not for him. The intolerance of party was now heightened by the advance of revolutionary principles in France, and the actual commencement of war with that country. Dr. Priestley found himself denounced and calumniated, the business prospects of his son injured, and his friends exposed to danger on his account. He therefore determined to leave England for the United States. He arrived in New York on the 4th of June, 1794.

His reception in this country was highly gratifying. Many persons came to meet him at his landing, and he received addresses of compliment from various societies, both in New York and Philadelphia, which was then the seat of the general government. At Philadelphia, he was offered the station of Professor of Chemistry, by a unanimous vote of the Trustees of the University; and from New York a request was sent him to return and open a place for Unitarian worship. But, declining these flattering offers, he chose a more retired home. The place he fixed upon was Northumberland, on the banks of the Susquehanna, in a region where his sons and other friends then proposed an extensive purchase of land, for the settlement of English emigrants.

In this retreat, to which he was attracted in part by the beauty of its scenery, he devoted his time, as in crowded Birmingham, partly to scientific experiments and partly to theological study and writing. He sent forth to the world, from time to time, the results of his researches in both these fields of labor. The defence of Christianity occupied no small portion of his thoughts. In 1796 he delivered in Philadelphia a series of discourses on the "Evidences of Revelation," which were numerously attended by the execu-

tive officers of the government, and the members of Congress. While at home, he conducted religious services on Sundays in his own house, for his own family and the few who sympathized with him. From this beginning, the number of attendants increased to the formation of a small society in the little town, which still holds its place on the list of our Unitarian churches. The design was at one time entertained of establishing a college at Northumberland, of which he was requested to take the Presidency. He accepted this proposal, with the condition that his labors should be gratuitous. He contemplated assisting the institution as lecturer, and by allowing it the use of his library and apparatus. The scheme, however, met with financial obstacles, and never went into operation. He was offered, some time after this, the Presidency of the University of Pennsylvania, but declined the charge.

Once more his name became connected with politics, when the great struggle came on which resulted in the downfall of the Federal administration, and the election of Mr. Jefferson. Dr. Priestley was in sympathy with the Republican or Democratic party of that day; and some political essays which appeared on that side, being erroneously ascribed to him, those of the opposite organization were excited to undue feeling against him. It was intimated to him, from high authority, that, by taking part in politics, he might come within the reach of the recently enacted alien law. He met this, not by silence, but by a series of letters expressing clearly his views, which removed from the minds of the candid any unfavorable impression respecting him.

The kindness of his friends in England followed him to America. Various donations, some of large amount, testified their respect for one who had suffered in the cause of civil and religious liberty. Among the tributes which genius offered him were these lines of Coleridge, who, then in earnest youth, sympathized with the views of Priestley in politics, philosophy, and religion.

"Though, roused by that dark vizier, Riot rude
Have driven our PRIEST over the ocean swell;
Though Superstition and her wolfish brood
Bay his mild radiance, impotent and fell,—

Calm in his halls of brightness he shall dwell !
For, lo ! Religion, at his strong behest,
Starts with mild anger from the Papal spell,
And flings to earth her tinsel-glittering vest,
Her mitred state, and cumbersome pomp unholy ;
And Justice wakes to bid the oppressor wail,
Insulting aye the wrongs of patient Folly ;
And from her dark retreat, by Wisdom won,
Meek Nature slowly lifts her matron veil,
To smile with fondness on her gazing son !"

In the autumn of 1795, he experienced the loss of his youngest son, to whom he had fondly looked to succeed him in his philosophical and theological pursuits. Not long after, a still greater affliction came upon him, in the removal of his beloved wife, " who, through life," to use the words of one of their children, " had been truly a helpmeet for him ; supporting him, under all his trials and sufferings, with a constancy and perseverance truly praiseworthy ; and who, as he himself justly observed, was of a noble and generous mind, and cared much for others, and little for herself during life." These losses he felt severely ; the more so, as till then, death had not entered his dwelling. But his habitual view of all events, as ordered by God for some good end, still sustained him ; and he was enabled to continue that round of useful occupation which assisted his efforts to repel every murmuring thought.

At length the time approached when that incessant activity of hand and brain should cease. A severe illness, which came upon him in Philadelphia, in 1801, left him enfeebled ; and that feebleness increased in the two following years. Yet, during those years, he was engaged in printing his " Church History " and the first volume of his " Notes on Scripture," in making philosophical experiments, and writing treatises. As, after an increase of illness, he became somewhat better, he said that he felt a return of strength, and with it there was a duty to perform. He resumed his reading, therefore, and afterwards gave directions to his son how to proceed with the printing of the work he had then in press, in case of his death.

The next day he was worse, but the day following again better ; spent much time in reading,—among other things, some chapters in the Greek Testament, according to his daily practice. He corrected a proof-sheet of his “ Notes on Isaiah.” He felt worse, however, on going to bed, and thought it probable he should not live another day. At prayer-time he wished to have his grandchildren kneel by his bedside, saying it gave him great pleasure to see the little things kneel ; and, thinking he possibly might not see them again, he gave them his blessing.

The next day, he continued, while in bed, his examination of the proof-sheets, enough to see how his son and the printers were likely to go on with the publication ; and, finding the Hebrew and Greek quotations printed right, said he was satisfied they would finish the work very well. In the course of the day, he expressed his gratitude for the many blessings of his life, and that he was now permitted to die quietly, in his family, without pain, and with every convenience and comfort he could wish for.

The next day, Sunday, he was much weaker. He desired his son to read to him, from the eleventh chapter of John, the account of the raising of Lazarus. After this, he spoke with him of the advantage of daily reading the Scriptures ; he gave to his son a pamphlet, which he recommended to him as expressing his own views on the limited duration of future punishment. “ We shall all,” said he, “ meet again : we only require different degrees of discipline, suited to our different tempers, to prepare us for final happiness.”

At prayer-time, as before, he had the children brought to his bedside ; and, after prayers, called them to him, and spoke to them each separately. He exhorted them all to continue to love each other. “ And you, little thing,” he said to one, “ remember the hymn you learned, ‘ Birds in their little nests agree.’ I am going to sleep as well as you ; for death is only a good long sound sleep in the grave, and we shall meet again.” He continued for some time his conversation, congratulating his son and daughter on the dispositions of their children, and expressing his confidence in a

happy immortality,—a state where there would be an ample field for the exertion of our faculties.

The next day, Monday, the 6th of February, 1804, began in great feebleness of body; but his active mind was engaged on some alterations he wished made in some of his pamphlets. When sufficient strength returned, he dictated these; and, when all was written as he desired, he said, “That is right, now I have done.” About half an hour after, he desired, in a faint voice, to be moved to an easier position. About ten minutes after this change was made, he breathed his last, so easily, that his son and daughter, seated by his bed, could not mark the moment he expired.

Thus, having completed the term of seventy years, active, loving, trustful to the last, died this great votary of science, freedom, and religion. Few writers have equalled him in the amount of their literary labors, none probably in the variety of topics to which they were devoted. In electricity he took up the then recent discoveries of Franklin and others, systematized them for popular use, and added new and valuable discoveries of his own. In chemistry he was a most successful laborer. Says a writer of that age, “To enumerate Dr. Priestley’s discoveries would, in fact, be to enter into a detail of most of those that have been made within the last fifteen years. The very air we breathe, he has taught us to analyze, to examine, to improve,—a substance so little known, that even the precise effect of respiration was an enigma until he explained it. . . . To him pharmacy is indebted for the method of making artificial mineral waters, as well as for a shorter method of preparing other medicines; metallurgy, for more powerful and cheap solvents; and chemistry, for such a variety of discoveries as it would be tedious to recite.” In metaphysics, if he took erroneous ground, he occupied it in the spirit of calm, fearless, and yet reverent inquiry; and the doctrine of fatalism, as he presented it, is free alike from the immoral consequences that have been sometimes connected with it, and from the difficulty that attaches to it, as expressed in the scheme of Calvin, of reconciling it with the justice and benevolence of God. In theology, he wrote on every sub-

ject in that wide field,—history, criticism, doctrine; and, though his conclusions in some respects are different from those held even in the denomination which he did so much to establish, its debt of gratitude to him for its independent existence is far greater than has, at least in this country, been acknowledged. From the partial difference of his religious and philosophical views from ours, and still more from the prejudice which unjustly was attached to his name as a favorer of French revolutionary principles, Dr. Priestley was never a favorite with the Unitarians of New England. Justice has, however, been done to his memory in a small selection from his writings, published some years since, with a memoir from the pen of the younger Henry Ware.

In England, too, justice, though tardy, has been accorded to one of the most laborious searchers after truth whom England ever produced. After the Birmingham riot, his friend and pupil, Letitia Barbauld, whom he first encouraged to poetical composition, addressed to him some lines, among which are these: —

“To thee, the slander of a passing age
Imports not. Scenes like these hold little space
In his large mind whose ample stretch of thought
Grasps future periods. Well canst thou afford
To give large credit for that debt of fame
Thy country owes thee. Calm thou canst consign it
To the slow payment of that distant day,
If distant, when thy name, to Freedom’s joined,
Shall meet the thanks of a regenerate land.”

In part, that hopeful prophecy has met its accomplishment. About four years since, the University of Oxford — the very centre and stronghold of that church establishment against whose exclusive claims, the clear, strong arguments of Priestley were directed — sought to embellish its proud halls with the statues of those who had deserved well of their country in the paths of science. Among them, a statue was decreed to Priestley; and churchman and dissenter joined together in conferring this honor on the memory of the man whom the blind fury of a former age had driven from the country which had been honored by his learning.

Of the personal character of Dr. Priestley, there remains little time to speak. Upright; without concealment and without severity, except when wrong called down his indignant rebuke; with the gentleness that made home delightful; and the courtesy that won even those strongly opposed to him in opinion to admire him as a man, — he crowned all these with an untiring zeal for the good of mankind, and a trustful piety toward God. His wonderful achievements as an observer of nature, a student, and a writer, were undoubtedly owing, in part, to a bodily and mental constitution of uncommon vigor; but that vigor was retained unimpaired by the faithful use he made of these advantages. He accomplished so much, not by self-destructive overtasking of the brain: no! with all his exertions, he had always abundant leisure for the society of his family and his friends. The secret was, that his industry was combined with order. No time was lost through want of method. All his labor was practically available; and his pursuits in their variety relieved each other. He presents in this an example worthy the attention of every student. He obeyed the precept of the Saviour, to work while it is called to-day; and the hope that cheered his parting hour was, that the privilege of faithful service should be renewed in heaven.

S. G. B.

IN every thing we do, we should look, not only at the act itself, but at our own state, past, present, future, and that of others whom it may concern; and examine the connection of all these things. Thus shall we preserve circumspection of conduct. — *Pascal.*

If we subject every thing to reason, our religion will be stripped of all its mysterious and superhuman character. If we violate the principles of reason, it will become absurd and ridiculous. — *Ibid.*

ALL are produced and directed by the same hand, — the root, the branch, the principle, the results. — *Ibid.*

NUMBERS resemble space, though in their nature they are so different. — *Ibid.*

SPIRITUAL PRESENCE.

FAITH in immortality *almost* includes faith in spiritual apparitions; for it is hard to believe that millions *live* and are *invisible*, that the friend who walked with us yesterday has not ceased to be, but only to be seen. It is hard to believe that the love which overcame all other obstacles cannot, for at least some brief moment, overcome also the grave.

There is a natural preparedness in the minds of men to believe in the re-appearance of those who have died. So it was once believed that Nero had revisited the earth to curse mankind with his presence. So, possibly, Saul believed in the re-appearance of Samuel. So the disciples of Jesus, seeing him walking on the water, cried out, "It is a *spirit*." And so, again, when, after the resurrection, he appeared among them, "they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit." So Eliphaz the Temanite is represented as saying, "Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a *spirit* passed before my face: the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence; and I heard a voice."

There is such preparedness and longing for the visible appearance of departed spirits, that it would require only a few well-authenticated instances of such appearance to awaken the universal faith. In view of this general tendency, the real wonder is, not that now and then in the annals of the race such an instance is alleged to have occurred, but that multitudes of such instances have not been alleged. The very infrequency of such allegations may be fairly urged in proof that, whenever made, they have been false.

The general course of human experience forces us to believe, against our want, against the sometime *longing* of our broken affections, that the loved ones who go from us can never more communicate with us while we remain upon

this earth. We must seek some other explication of the strange phenomena which, in the ancient times, were accredited to Apollo; in the time of Jesus, to emissaries of Satan; in later times were called witchcraft, and to-day are revived as spiritual manifestations. In the occult laws of the mysterious realm where mind and matter find their place of meeting, hidden now from human research, the true explication of these mysteries will some time be discovered. To refer them now to the agency of departed friends would be to forestall the judgment of a wiser age.

When those whom we knew in the flesh laid off the material form, they went beyond the reach of our present faculties. They give no tokens of their continued presence that we can either see or feel or hear. Even though, in the solemnity of the last hour, we may have exacted from them the promise, that, if in any way it shall be possible, they will continue their loving communications from the place to which they go; and thenceforth day after day we wait, with our ear inclined to the dread silence, for the promised token of the love which we *know* death has not reached,—we shall wait evermore in vain. We call, but there is no answer. No voice comes from the grave. There is no whisper when we listen long in the stillness of night; there is no touch; there is no vision.

For the expressions of the disembodied spirit are through instrumentalities too delicate to make resonance for the fleshly ear, to stamp an impress upon the retina of the mortal eye, or to start any of the slow susceptibilities of clay. All we can say is, they went away: the places which have known them shall know them no more for ever.

But we are not, nevertheless, abandoned wholly by those whom we can see no longer. Though there may not be *communication*, there may be *communion*. Among the living, communion is enjoyed chiefly through communication,—through the spoken or written word, the glance of the eye, the clasp of the hand. But are these media *necessary* for communion with our friend? Has he been so long time with us, and do we still need to be *told* what is in his heart?

As we commune still with our absent beloved, separated from us by the sea ; so, though he were to go even farther, over beyond the seas which divide the spirit-world from ours, still, without communication from him, we may hold communion with him. As by an exercise of memory and imagination we can summon to our side our absent friend, and, by imagining his presence, enjoy something of that felicity which the actual presence would afford ; so we may still have intercourse with those from whom no token reaches our yearning hearts. We can recall their characteristics which endeared them to our souls ; we can bring up from the buried past, which opened for us on the opening of the new grave, the affections which they had expressed, and the subtle peculiarities of thought and feeling which distinguished them from all others. Believing in the deathlessness of their love, we can think of them as being very near to us, and as desiring, though unable to communicate as in other times, affection and counsel. Then we may forbid the barriers of the grave, and refuse to be separated from the friend whom it has claimed.

And what if it should be that these unseen dear ones come nearest to us in our holiest moods ? What if it should be, that, in their purified vision, the evil thought and feeling to which we sometimes give ourselves appear abominable, and do actually remove their presence from us ? Perhaps, as they hover near on viewless wings, they are able to see us only in the moments of our purest feeling, when the soul, estranged from the degrading importunities of the merely earthly life, ascends to meet the purity in which they dwell. Perhaps, on the other hand, when we are wholly engrossed in material things, an earthly miasma rises around us, shutting us out from the eyes which long to follow us. This, indeed, we do not *know* ; but we are greatly in error if we think that our conduct either is or ought to be guided only by what is certain. So long as these possibilities are in *any* degree probable, who will not be constrained by them, even through the love he bears to the unseen loving, to so live that he shall not even *perhaps* withdraw himself from their wistful view ?

RANDOM READINGS.

GREETINGS.

EIGHTEEN hundred and sixty-five comes upon us with rents through the clouds, and the land of promise in full view. The vibration of the national mind from fear and despondency to hope, confidence, and trust, has been sudden, but very decisive. It is not so much the triumph of an election, as the spirit of it, that gives us a joyous faith in the future. There were signs, not to be mistaken, that the spirit breathing through the people was the spirit of the Lord, who is leading us in paths that we have not known, and preparing the way for his more glorious coming. No such war has ever been known in history as we are passing through, taking into account, not merely the numbers that are engaged in it, but the marked influence on national and individual character. Our soldiers return to us, not corrupted and brutalized, but more manly, more gentle, and self-forgetting. Boys become heroic; and cases are not wanting where profligate men have become purified, and girded with moral strength. Of course, it is not always so. But it is always so where men have been drawn into the country's service, with a clear view of the great end to be achieved, and the desire to be given for it.

New times are coming, and demand of us to gird ourselves for them. The classes and peoples that make up the nation are to be more thoroughly fused; and, as a consequence, sects are to broaden towards catholicity, while the religious life is to be more deep and earnest. More work is to be done, and on a grander scale, in the education and evangelization of the masses, on whom the light has shone feebly before. Four millions of a race who had been enslaved and degraded, but whose acclamations and thanksgivings for freedom are already rising upon the air, are to be educated, elevated, and taught the use of their newly awaked faculties. As many more white people, ignorant, bewildered, misguided, will ask the same boon. Never before were such fields opening for a free gospel and its heralds. Nor is the great sacrifice complete. The war will last at least through the year,

demanding of us both faith and works. Half a million of men, our kith and kin, with arms in their hands, and their lives staked upon the issue, turn towards the old homes with asking eyes, which say: "Do not betray us by unfaithfulness. Work and pray for us, and for the country,—the dear mother whom we will die to save." Let us respond to the call made upon us, to send them books and tracts as angel-visitants. And let us enter upon a new epoch, both of our own and the nation's life, with fresh vows of self-consecration, and the consciousness that God is over us, and in us, and working with us; and that thousands of our brothers, who have risen from a hundred battle-fields, the martyrs of our hero age,—many of them as pure spirits as ever put on immortality,—are more than ever with us; breathing their souls into ours, urging us to devote ourselves to the glorious future that opens for the country on this New Year's Day.

S.

THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD: THE PROVIDENCES OF OUR WAR.

IN former days, when the subject of slavery was brought up, there were many who said,—It is a matter which we cannot deal with; we shall do more harm than good by our words; we must leave it to the Providence of God, who, in his own good time, will remove what even those that are interested in it pronounce to be a curse. And perhaps we hoped that the way of the divine Providence would be less exacting of labors and sacrifices than any way which we might choose. The hand of God is doing it,—not, however, as we had hoped, without losses and tears and blood. Great elemental forces, over which we have no control, are working out for us a deliverance of which we have not as yet learned the full price, immense as we already know it to be. And we cannot fall back, save upon national destruction. Whatever perils may be before us, the perils behind are greater. We are under a certain divine necessity to succeed. It is not your opinion or mine, your will or mine, any more: it is what must be. It is the mighty swing of the ocean. It is the sweep of the tempest. It is the upheaving of volcanic fire. It is the grasp of the sun upon the planets. God in his Providence, not man in his

blindness and weakness and timidities, is refashioning this nation, and making us what he would have us; and what he doeth, needeth not to be added unto, or to be taken from.

“ Who murmurs that in these dark days
His lot is cast?
God’s hand within the shadow lays
The stones whereon his gates of praise
Shall rise at last.

Turn and o’erturn, O outstretched hand!
Nor stint nor stay:
The years have never dropped their sand
On mortal issue vast and grand
As ours to-day.”

If Whittier, the sweetest and most truly inspired of our American poets, could write these stanzas more than a year ago, the great truth which they teach has become more abundantly manifest with our added experiences. I turn, then, not in any mere holiday mood, but with deep and solemn gladness, and welcome the rich opportunities of a day which the Lord has been making, and shall yet make, for us. Is not our time so full of new life, God’s answer to our frequent prayer, “Send the kingdom in our day, O Lord! Let us be able, though at great cost, to put more of the truth which we profess and love into our institutions, and the life of our world! Of course, we shall not see this, if we look only at the losses and desolations. There are those who turn their backs upon the sun, and mourn over the going-out of the stars. Whilst the summer tempest darkens the sky, and pours over the fields the destructive torrent, and sweeps down upon corn and vine and sapling, and threatens even the strong tree, you can only say it is a fearful time; and you look about eagerly for shelter and safety: but presently the wind is still, and the clouds fade away before the sun, and the fresh new earth lies out before you in calm beauty, as when God looked upon his work, and saw that it was good. So it shall be with us when the war-cloud shall have passed over the land; that cloud, which, alas! rains such precious blood. It is easy enough to see and say it is human passion, and it is spending itself at a frightful rate, and to our great grief and amazement; but what we want is to look at the positive side, at the new creation which is gradually rising from the ruins of

the old, the genuine Democracy, the social order which helps in all ways, and doth in nowise hinder the unfolding of mind and heart and spirit, according to the measures which God has given unto each man. Desolations, bereavements, straitened circumstances, heart-burnings, untold bodily sufferings, doubtless, for this generation,—it is no sport to be cast into the Lord's furnace, and to be laid upon his anvil, and, when men wait for Providence, they little think what they are waiting for,—and yet with these trials that deep joy which proceeds from the sense of an inflowing life, of new faiths, hopes, and loves, enlarging the heart: these losses and gains to-day, but what blessings unmeasured for the generation to come, for the little child upon whose forehead hath been dropped the sacred water which symbolizes the new life of divine purity and immortal hope; what comforting assurance of a peaceful and progressive civilization, in which there shall be only the generous rivalries of States eager each to outrun the other in blessed sun-paths that lead through earth to heaven! And an almighty and merciful and most wise Lord does not leave it for our weakness to choose simply between evil and good. He sets before us rather DEATH and LIFE, and bids us choose, that we and our children and our children's children may live. And we shall live. We have come of too noble and too Christian a stock that we should allow suffering, or the dread of suffering, to stand between us and the high good, which, with the help of God, we mean to confer upon this land, and not least upon those who are now opposed to us, and who shall only be benefited by the terrible war which they have brought upon this people. We have paid too large a price in lives that were amongst the most precious of the land, that we should lose the fair prize of a free, united, and peaceful country.

And now let our readers lay it to heart, that the year which the Lord has given us brings with it duties which no just person will decline to discharge, which no generous person will call by any lower name than privileges. The year of national revival and promise must be, to a great multitude, a year of outward hardship. It is, indeed, a high distinction to be counted worthy so to suffer, and a deep joy will mingle with a deep sorrow in many a heart, on these opening days of the new year, as the inward eye, the eye which sees visions, follows to the vacant place the dear one that went away in the body, and returns now in the

spirit. But, to these compensations, we must add our warmest sympathies, and, where need is, our most unstinted offerings of time and substance,—not charities but dues; and all the while, by maintaining our own spirits at the high level of this high hour, we must give to no mourner the least occasion to feel,—saddest and dreariest of all feelings!—that tears and blood, widowhood and orphanage, dwellings which henceforth shall always be lonely, mothers who can never be quite comforted,—all these sufferings and sufferers, have only been unto the increase of the vast ocean of human misery. If, at the end of these eventful days, and in the time of success, which is sure to come, they shall scarcely be saved who have done and suffered little or nothing, what place shall be found for those who have added, to the real burden of the hour, the weight of their heavy spirits? And let us not, in consecrating ourselves to solemn joys and highest privileges, forget any humblest duty of the season, or fail in our Christian remembrance of the poor, who are ever with us, and, whether in war or in peace, are still the poor! Let not the weight under which the strong stagger crush the weak; and, as one hand has been open for our brave and patient soldiers, so let the other be open for those whose bravery and patience at home are none the less real because they are so often and so much unknown. For this giving let there be no left hand: a hundred right hands would be all too few to finish the work of the Lord's great year.

E.

MY CREED.

I BELIEVE in God, Infinite Fountain of righteousness, truth, and love, Creator of the universe, and Father of mankind.

I believe in his providential government of the world after a perfect purpose.

I believe that he has begotten man in his own image, with the nature and the power to grow in moral likeness towards him for ever, by partaking of his spirit.

I believe in his displeasure at sin, its righteous retribution, and his forgiveness of it upon repentance.

I believe in the power of prayer to derive help from God.

I believe that God has revealed his truth in the hearts and

consciences of all men, but most of all in the holiest, whose words become our holy scriptures.

I believe that the divinest life ever lived upon earth was that of Jesus the Christ, who is thus our highest revelation of God and of man, and whose spiritual attractiveness has power, under God, to draw all men into his likeness.

I believe in the endless life, the constant discipline, and the final holiness of all mankind.

I believe in heaven, whose life may be partly known, here and now, in the soul, independent of circumstance; but which is at last the home, in which all beings shall dwell in perfect satisfaction with their Father, God, for ever.

For my belief in these blessed truths, I thank God with joy unspeakable: I desire to live according to the light of them; and I would earnestly spread them to every creature.

J. C. P.

MEASURE AND RHYME IN HEBREW POETRY.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—Having recently had occasion to read some of the psalms in Hebrew, I have been interested, as others have been before, to observe how far there was any resemblance between their rhythmical cadence, and the measures of modern poetry. In the following translations, I have attempted to render the ancient words in the ancient measure, syllable for syllable, accent for accent, and rhyme for rhyme. I fear, indeed, that the ancient spirit has escaped in the process; and feel how feebly I have translated the strong, scornful words, which are best rendered simply,

“Our lips are our own;
Who is lord over us?”

But my attempt may at least convey some idea of what poetical measure and rhyme were, before Grecian genius gave laws to the one, and modern literature transformed the other from an occasional ornament to a regular form of composition. The rhymes in these two psalms are the result, in each case, of similar grammatical structure in successive lines: they seem to have come spontaneously to the writer, rather than to have been sought by him. No doubt, it was from such accidental rhyming that this great ornament of poetry was first discovered. The wonder is,

that so many ages should have passed before the importance of the discovery was appreciated.

In the "Shepherd's Psalm," one of the most musical lines has very nearly the cadence of that which corresponds with it in Montgomery's beautiful version : —

"Dishánta bashémen roshí, cosí rivayá."
"With perfume and oil, thou anointest my head."

PSALM XII.

Support me, Mighty One, for in thee I trust.
For faithfulness is failing the sons of men.
Vain is their speech, man with man talking ;
Their lips are deceitful, double-hearted their accents.
The Lord shall cut off all the lips of deceit,
Tongues uttering proud and lofty words ;
Who said, our tongues shall be means of conquest,
And our lips none restraineth ;
Who o'er us reigneth ?
Because of the meek,
For defending of the weak,
I now rise up, proclaims the All Just,
And set him free from the scornful foe.
The words of the Lord are the words of the pure,
Silver tried in furnace earthen-moulded,
Melted over seven times.
O Lord, thou wilt keep the upright,
And preserve them from this vile race evermore.
The wicked walk haughtily around,
When baseness rules among mankind.

PSALM XXIII.

Be my shepherd God, nought shall I want.
In a green pasture he me feedeth ;
By waters of stillness he me leadeth ;
Restoreth my soul, and precedeth
In paths of uprightness, because of his name.
Yea, though I walk in death's dark valley,
I'll fear no ill, for 'tis thou who art near.
'Tis thy rod, the staff is thine, that keep me and give me comfort.
Thou preparest my table before the face of my foes.
With oil thou anointest my head, my cup brimmeth o'er.
Yea, Lord, thy loving-kindness through my life's whole circuit goes.
I shall dwell in God's holy place for days unending. S. G. B.

A MODERN GREEK PREACHER.

ATHENS, November 7, 1853.

EARLY this morning I went to the Church of St. Demetrius, to hear a celebrated Greek preacher, Metrophanes. It is a great *fête* day,—*eortè*, as they call it in Greek; and the whole population of Athens put on their best clothes in honor of so distinguished a saint. I was at the church-door at eight o'clock, and had some difficulty in getting in, till a Greek friend who was with me whispered that I was an *Americanós*, when the crowd not only gave way, but some of them led me to a kind of stall near the pulpit, usually occupied by some ecclesiastical dignitary. The chants were performing; but I cannot say that I was much edified or delighted by the style of the singing.

If S—— is correct in supposing that the Greek Church has preserved, in part, the ancient Dorian and Æolian moods, why, then, I must think the Dorian and Æolian moods were not much better than that bit of Pindaric music which you once performed, but refused to repeat. After an hour and a half of this infliction on my delicate, musical sensibilities, varied by swinging censers, and perfuming the church (which needed it), and sprinkling perfumed water over the heads of the people (I had about half a pint dashed into my face over my spectacles, which I was obliged to take off and wipe), a strange-looking chap, with long hair hanging over his shoulders, and a grotesque, many-colored dress, mounted the pulpit, and began to chant alone. At first I thought it was the sermon, and I recalled various statements about the ancient fashion of pitching a tone at the commencement of an oration; but I soon discovered that he was not the preacher.

The preacher is one of the four authorized to preach in Athens; for the Greek Church very prudently permits only a small portion of its clergy to perform this function, thereby—an arrangement worth thinking of elsewhere—saving the heavens from a great deal of unnecessary vexation.

His sanctity, Mr. Metrophanes, is a good-looking man, with a fine voice, and an earnest, eloquent style. His sermon was excellent and practical, naturally arising out of the occasion, and treating of the proper use to be made of festivals. “ You must not pass the day in drinking, in gluttony, in wantonness: you

must make it the occasion for kindness and charity, for mutual love, and the practice of all the virtues." Just at this moment, a crowd of Athenian women, just over my head, in a little gallery, began to chatter so loud, that, for some minutes, I could not hear a word. His sanctity turned in the direction of the noise, stopped a moment, and then said, to some lay functionary of the church, "Tell those women to hold their tongues, or I will come down." This, of course, put an end to the disturbance; and the sermon went on to the conclusion.—*Familiar Letters from Europe: Felton.*

THE LESSON OF THE HOUR.

STRONG in faith for the future,
Drawing our hope from the past;
Manfully standing to battle,
However may blow the blast;
Onward still pressing undaunted,
Let the foe be strong as he may:
Though the sky be dark as midnight,
Remembering the dawn of day.

Strong in the cause of freedom,
Bold for the sake of right;
Watchful and ready always,
Alert by day and night:
With a sword for the foe of freedom,
From whatever side he come;
The same for the open foeman,
And the traitorous friend at home.

Strong, with the arm uplifted,
And nerved with God's own might;
In an age of glory living,
In a holy cause to fight;
And whilom catching music
Of the future's minstrelsy,
As those who strike for freedom
Blows that can never die.

Strong, though the world may threaten,
Though thrones may totter down,
And in many an Old World palace
Uneasy sits the crown.

Not for the present only
Is the war we wage to-day;
But the sound shall echo ever,
When we shall have passed away.

Strong,— 'tis an age of glory,
And worth a thousand years
Of petty, weak disputings,
Of ambitious hopes and fears;
And we, if we learn the lesson
All glorious and sublime,
Shall go down to future ages,
As heroes for all time.

Strong,— not in human boasting,
But with high and holy will,—
The means of a mighty Worker,
His purpose to fulfil.
O patient warriors, watchers!
A thousand-fold your power,
If ye read with prayerful purpose
The Lesson of the Hour.

Continental Monthly.

"SEMI-EVANGELICAL."

THE "Congregationalist" and the "Recorder" seem doubtful whether the Methodists are entitled to the full name of Evangelical Christians. The reason is, that two Methodist ministers in Boston have exchanged with Unitarians. It is well known that Rev. Dr. Huntington, while yet a Unitarian, preached in Orthodox Congregational pulpits. One of the editors of this Magazine has done the same repeatedly at the invitation of Orthodox clergymen. Therefore, by the rule, Orthodox Congregationalism is "semi-evangelical." We hope the rule will not work both ways,— and that, when Orthodox ministers preach in our pulpits, it will not make us *semi-Calvinists*. Can we not understand that Christianity is larger than Congregationalism, Methodism, or Unitarianism, or all three of them together?

s.

THOSE who dislike the truth make a pretext of the multitudinous differences among those who oppose it; which shows that they love neither truth nor charity. Thus they are without excuse.— *Pascal.*

LITERARY NOTICES.

Sermons of Consolation. By F. W. P. GREENWOOD, D.D., late minister of King's Chapel, Boston. A new edition. Boston: Little, Brown, & Company. 1864. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

They are what their name imports, and multitudes have found them to be so. Out of print here, it had been found necessary to import the English reprint. Our own is better, and it is better to have our own. A sweet, gentle voice of trust still speaks to us in these well-remembered words. It is a volume which one finds it hard to keep, so many are the occasions for giving it away. Of such books we can never have enough. E.

The Rules and Exercises of Holy Living. By JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

The Rules and Exercises of Holy Dying. By JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

Selections from Jeremy Taylor. Little, Brown, & Company. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

No better service can be done to our young men and maidens than to put into their hands the words of this prince of divines, and Christian of Christians. For ourselves, we never turn to him in vain for inspiration, instruction, encouragement. Some of the forms in which he thought have become, or are becoming, obsolete ; but, even now, we are not cramped much by them, because they were so enlarged and illumined by his divine spirit. Continually, as we read him, do we say, he speaks better things than he knows. Like the prophets of old, he rises above his time, and is gloriously, grandly inconsistent, as most large-minded and large-hearted men are. Dr. South entertains and occupies the intellect, but often sadly disappoints the heart. Taylor edifies, builds up the soul, kindles devotion, awakens and strengthens a pious trust ; and, in reading his pages, we are reminded how much the understanding is enriched by affection, and what a vast difference there is between a glowing and a glittering eloquence, between those imaginations of vain man which are mere impertinences, and the

words spoken in a figure, because no other words are in any degree commensurate with the thought. Why are not such books written now? We cannot say, perhaps. It may be that it is not given to our busy and so-called practical age so to write. At all events, such books are not written. The best are thin, shallow, limited, compared with these. Let preachers and hearers read, study, mark, and inwardly digest Taylor. What we want, amidst all our speculating and criticising, is the religious spirit,—the spirit that has found God, and been found of him.

These editions, in the larger and in the smaller forms, are beyond praise. If the difficulty of obtaining English books is to be the occasion of our obtaining such American editions as these, there will be some compensation for the high rate of exchange. Mr. Abbot, whose exceeding accuracy is well known, has been at pains to verify the quotations so freely scattered over Taylor's writings, and has corrected many errors. What a testimony to the unimpaired strength of our country, that such books as these should appear in war-time! They may unhesitatingly be pronounced the best editions of the "Holy Living" and "Dying" which have ever been given to the world.

E.

The Holy and Profane States. By THOMAS FULLER. With some account of the author and his writings. Boston: Little, Brown, & Company. 1864. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

A beautiful edition of an English classic. Fuller is always stimulating, suggestive, and instructive,—so full that it is not good to read him very largely, but rather according to measure, as one resorts to tonics and condiments. So you will lay this book (if you are fortunate enough to have it) upon your table, and take it up from time to time, in your spare moments, to find yourself greatly refreshed.

E.

The Seer; or, Commonplaces Refreshed. By LEIGH HUNT. In two volumes. Boston: Roberts Brothers, Publishers, 143, Washington Street. 1864. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

"The Seer" does not see with the inward eye,—did not mean to do so. His report is not of deep things, or distant. There is much in the volumes which is superficial,—some easy writing, which is not very easy reading. The Commonplaces have not

always been sufficiently refreshed: some of them were hardly capable of it. And yet, it is a work that will afford a great deal of instruction and entertainment in moments of leisure. The essay on "The Beauties of St. Francis De Sales" is especially interesting. The externals of the volumes are admirably adapted to attract and hold the reader.

E.

Shakspeare's Sonnets. Ticknor & Fields. 1865. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

Only the sonnets; and these are just what many a reader asks for. As we need not say, they are full of beauties and of mysteries. The little square volume is very fascinating.

E.

A Tribute to Thomas Starr King. By RICHARD FROTHINGHAM. Ticknor & Fields. 1865. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

Mr. Frothingham has brought together, in a very happy way, many precious memorials of one whose death we must note as one of the greatest losses of the year which has just closed. We shall not soon forget the twelvemonth that was darkened so early by that dying, and yet so enriched by the faith, which, as it had wrought mightily in the day of strength, was found altogether sufficient in the hour of weakness and the moments of dissolution.

E.

Enoch Arden. By ALFRED TENNYSON, D.C.L. Poet Laureate. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

We have already briefly recorded our estimate of this charming poem, and of the other contents of the volume; and we shall only add, that the copy before us is one of the blue and gold series, and is enriched by a pleasant little biographical notice.

E.

Following the Flag from August, 1861, to November, 1862, with the Army of the Potomac. By "CARLETON," author of "My Days and Nights on the Battle-field." Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1865. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

It is refreshing to have a "fact-book,"—and such this seems to be,—not fictions, but the deeds and the sufferings of our own heroes. As such, the boys will welcome it, and lay up its contents in faithful memories.

E.

Our Young Folks: An Illustrated Magazine for Boys and Girls. Edited by J. T. TROWBRIDGE, GAIL HAMILTON, and LUCY LAR-

com. Boston : Ticknor & Fields. New York : The American News Company. Philadelphia : T. B. Pugh. Chicago : John R. Walsh. Price, twenty cents. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

It is the first and a very attractive number of what promises to be a very pleasant and useful journal. Mrs. Stowe opens with a charming little paper, all the more interesting, perhaps, to the present writer, from his familiarity with the *locale*. She is well followed by the editors, and by other deservedly popular writers. Amongst the rest, Dio Lewis contributes admirable suggestions upon the physical training of the young, with drawings that make it all plain. The illustrations are spirited and appropriate ; and the picture of the author of "Tom Brown" is a most auspicious herald and earnest of the new enterprise. Any person of common sense will see at once, that to sell such a journal for two dollars a year will be impossible, unless the list of subscribers shall be very large.

E.

Essays, Historical and Biographical, Political, Social, Literary, and Scientific. By HUGH MILLER. Edited, with a preface, by PETER BAYNE. Boston : Gould & Lincoln. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

Hugh Miller was for sixteen years editor of "The Witness," a religious paper, in the interest of the Presbyterian Church, published in Edinburgh. The present volume is made up of articles written and published in the "Witness" during that time. They are models for editorials, written in Hugh Miller's terse, vigorous, and picturesque English, and embody a mass of thought of more than passing interest on a great variety of themes. They were thrown out from a mind of inexhaustible wealth, both scientific and historical. They are addressed more to Scotch and English than to American readers ; but many of them are of general interest, and all of them are memorials of a most remarkable genius.

S.

The Gypsies of the Danes' Dike : A Story of Hedgeside Life in England in the year 1855. By GEORGE S. PHILLIPS. Boston : Ticknor & Fields. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

This book is claimed to give a correct representation of gypsy life and character, and of the scenery between Yorkshire and the German ocean, which forms the background of the story. The

story itself is wild and romantic, with an infusion of the supernatural and the improbable. Its weird strangeness and wildness, and a phasis of human life never before wrought into romance, are the chief elements of interest. S.

The Autumn Holidays. By the COUNTRY PARSON. Boston : Ticknor & Fields. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

Is in the author's free and easy and most genial style. Farther notice, with extracts, will be given. Also of *Dramatis Personæ*, issued by the same publishers ; the latest poems of Robert Browning. They are not holiday reading, but the highest metaphysics of poetry. We are on "Mr. Sludge the Medium." S.

Tragedies and Poems. By T. N. TALFOURD. Boston : Crosby & Ainsworth. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

"Ion" and "The Athenian Captive" are old favorites of the American reading public, which had become out of print. We are exceedingly glad to greet their re-appearance in a handsome duodecimo volume. They are written (chiselled, we might say) with exquisite classic grace, and contain some of the finest passages in English literature. To these are now added the tragedy of "Glencoe." Look up the facts in Macaulay's History of the Reign of William the Third, and a trenchant review of the same in "Blackwood's Magazine," some three or four years since, and the reader will have a full view of one of the most disgraceful transactions in English history ; of a stain which remains crimson red on the English character and government ; of the same dye as the rebel murders and piracies which it helps on and sympathizes with. Having full possession of the facts, the reader will have a most vivid appreciation of Talfourd's "Glencoe." The author's sonnets and shorter pieces are subjoined, making a most welcome volume of two hundred and sixty pages. S.

The Ocean Waifs : a Story of Adventure on Land and Sea. By CAPT. MAYNE REID. Boston : Ticknor & Fields. 1865.

The public are indebted to the ROBERTS BROTHERS for the republication of Jean Ingelow's sweet poems ; and now they have to thank the same firm for a prose volume from the same author, which will be heartily welcomed by her many admirers. For sale by W. V. SPENCER, 134, Washington street, Boston. E.

Watch & Wait; or, the Young Fugitives: a Story for Young People. By OLIVER OPTIC. Boston: Lee & Shephard, successors to Philips, Sampson, & Company 1864.

Dramatis Personæ. By ROBERT BROWNING. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

A new volume of Robert Browning, of 262 pages. We have read them only three times. We shall not pretend to expound them till after the sixth reading. Some of them, however, break upon us in spots. Some of the shorter ones—"Prospice" and "Apparent Failure," for instance—have become nearly enucleated; and the bright nodes in "Mr. Sludge, the medium," enlarge themselves with every new revolution. Spiritualism is raked by a very scathing satire. Quadratic equations are recommended as an excellent study for cultivating the power of attention and concentration. We recommend Robert Browning for the same object.

S.

Honey-blossoms for Little Bees; and The Grahams. By JANE GAY FULLER. New York: Published by M. W. Dodd, 506, Broadway. 1864. Sold by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

The former, for very young readers; the latter, for those who are older, but still young,—each good in its way. The type of the "Blossoms" will make it especially attractive to the "Bees." The Grahams are true patriots.

E.

The Tiger Prince; or, Adventures in Abyssinia. By WILLIAM DALTON. With illustrations. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

Gascoyne, The Sandal-wood Trader: A Tale of the Pacific. By R. M. BALLANTYNE, author of "The Young Fur-traders," &c. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

Helen and Her Cousins; or, Two Months at Ashfield Rectory. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

The Pigeon-pie: A Tale of Roundhead Times. By Miss YONGE, author of "Heir of Redclyffe." All by Roberts Brothers, Publishers, 143, Washington Street, Boston. 1864. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

Of these books, the first and smallest is most to our own taste; but the children would outvote us, and give the preference to the

"Sandal-wood Trader," or the "Tiger Prince." The latter volume contains a great deal of valuable information. "The Pigeon-pie" affords a glimpse of the days of the English Commonwealth; but the impression which may be made upon the minds of the young readers will need to be corrected by a few good Puritan words.

E.

JUVENILE BOOKS.

THE young folks have abundant reason to bless the publishers, who have spread out a feast for them unusually rich and enticing. We have dipped into some of the children's books pretty deeply, and find them very absorbing to children of larger growth.

CROSBY AND AINSWORTH have a charming variety for boys and girls, among which the following are fresh from the press. *The Adventures of Rob Roy*, by JAMES GRANT, Esq., with illustrations: a book which no one, old or young, will lay aside till finished, after once taking it up. It gives vivid sketches of the wonderful highland chief, with a solid basis of historical fact, and picturesque descriptions of highland scenery. It corrects some wrong popular impressions about Rob Roy and his Helen, brings out the nobleness of his character in full relief, illustrates highland manners and customs, and ought to be placed beside the "Rob Roy" of Sir Walter Scott, and always read in connection with it.—*Life in the Woods*, edited by JOHN C. GEIKIE, with illustrations, is a delightful book for the winter evenings. It takes the boys from England over the sea, lands them in Canada, familiarizes them with Canadian life in the backwoods, the climate and country, the bears and the rattlesnakes, the farms and the farming, the people, the lakes, and the scenery, with incidents of adventure told in lively sketches.—*Freaks on the Fells, or Three Months' Rustication; and Why I did not become a Sailor*, by R. M. BALLANTYNE, with illustrations, make a volume in two parts. In the first part, Mr. John Sudberry and his family go from London to rusticate three months. Mr. John Sudberry is a very amusing character, and the family exploits in Scotland are a series of very amusing adventures; and the characters are individualized with much spirit and humor. The second part of the book is the dream of a boy who was cured of the disposition to run away.—*Romantic Belinda*, by Mrs. L.

C. TUTHILL, is a book for girls. It is a very good book, as are all we have seen from the pen of this writer. Some ridiculous notions which get into some girls' heads, it puts clean out, and puts good sense in the place thereof. Let the girls read and practise. — *Grace's Visit; or, the Wrong Way to Cure a Fault*, illustrated with engravings, is a book for both boys and girls, is a good story, with amusing incidents, and teaches a good lesson pertaining to playing tricks to frighten children.

J. E. TILTON & Co. publish *Dora Darling; or, the Daughter of the Regiment*, which we can assure both the juveniles and their elders, will be a darling book with them, to be read with alternate laughter and tears. Dora had a Secesh father and brother, and a Union mother in a Virginia home. The mother dies, the father and brother enlist in the rebel army. Dora, and Pic, the faithful old negro,— faithful, that is, to "Missus,"— run away, are hunted in vain by a bloodhound, and find their way into the Union camp. Dora is adopted by an Ohio regiment; and both Dora and Pic are famous characters drawn with graphic power. Pic is every way the equal of Uncle Tiff in "Dred;" and the story holds the reader's unflagging interest to the close.— *The Life-boat: a Tale of our Coast Heroes*, with illustrations, by R. M. BALLANTYNE, is from the same publishers, a story of romantic peril and bravery in the rescue of shipwrecked sailors.

LEE & SHEPARD publish *The Sailor-boy; or, Jack Somers in the Navy*: a Story of the great Rebellion, by OLIVER OPTIC. It is founded largely in fact, and illustrates the brilliant deeds of our naval heroes in our present national struggle, especially upon our western waters. It will give young readers a vivid picture of naval life, will inflame their love of country, and their pride in its glorious achievements, and help educate them in a self-devotion to its cause. It belongs to a class of books which should be in the hands of all young readers, upon whose fidelity the destiny of the Republic is so soon to devolve; and with whom the largest patriotism should be not only a sentiment, but a burning passion. s.

Real and Ideal. By JOHN W. MONTCLAIR. Philadelphia: Frederick Leypoldt.

A book of poems by a poet, who makes now, we believe, his first appearance before the public. The poems are partly original, partly translations from the German. The translations are the best. The work is commended by Fitz-Greene Halleck, John

Neal. Sarah H. Whitman, by the "New-York Evening Post," and others, we presume because they see in the writer promise of what he may yet do. We can see grace and culture in what he has already done; but we do not trace the spontaneous workings and inspirations of higher genius. S.

LIVES OF FAMILIAR INSECTS is a very interesting and useful volume of the Summer-house series, by the author of "Violet." They can be bought of TAGGARD & THOMPSON, 29, Cornhill, who also have for sale a nice little book called A TEACHER'S GIFT; and very pretty and convenient slates, of stone and of paper, for writing, arithmetic, and drawing.

THE MARTIN AND NELLY STORIES are very pleasantly written, and very beautifully illustrated; and the tone of the books is excellent.

THE DIARY OF KITTY TREVYLAR, by the author of the "Schoenberg-Cotta Family," will interest the reader—so we judge from a slight taste of the contents—as much as the charming book, the title of which we have just written down. Published by M. W. DODD, 506, Broadway, N.Y. It is for sale by W. V. SPENCER, 134, Washington street, Boston.

KEBLE'S CHRISTIAN YEAR is as familiar as it is dear to Christians of every name in England and America, as we need not say; but we do wish to remind our readers that they can find a most choice edition of it at the bookstores of E. P. DUTTON & Co.; and that no better gift can be selected for a valued friend.

Clever Stories of Many Nations rendered in Rhyme. By JOHN G. SAXE. Illustrated by W. L. Champney. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1865. For sale by W. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street.

This is in every way a charming book for young or old. The stories are good and well told, whilst paper, print, and binding are admirable. The illustrations are abundant and spirited. We only wish that we had received the volume in season to commend it as a Christmas gift. E.

If our readers will step into SPENCER's, 134, Washington street, and buy a copy of CHRISTUS VICTOR, they will be very likely to go again and get another, to give to a friend as a word in season,—"a leaf from the tree of life,"—which indeed the book is. E.